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ARGENTINA: Major Issues

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Human Rights - The human rights situation in Argentina is the principal obstacle to closer relations between our two countries. The Argentine government continues to refuse to acknowledge the names of thousands of political prisoners under detention; disappearances, summary executions, torture and prolonged periods of incommunication are undeniable. Government officials claim that the terrorists pose a grave threat to Argentine society, and that counterterrorist violations of human rights are, therefore, justified on the grounds of security considerations. The terrorist threat to Argentine security, however, has been greatly diminished by the government's harsh methods. It is to be hoped that the Argentines will now move energetically to eliminate lawlessness.

Because of continuing human rights violations in Argentina, we have restricted military sales and voiced our concern with Argentine loan requests in the IFIs. Specifically, we are not providing FY 1977 credits and commercial licenses for sensitive equipment is reviewed on a case-by-case basis. The Argentines have rejected FY 1978 credits because of our human rights stance and the Humphrey/Kennedy amendment, which goes into effect October 1, 1976, will cut almost all US military ties to Argentina. In the IFIs we have asked the Argentines to delay formal submission of loan requests because of our human rights concerns. D/HA may soon move to block Eximbank loans.

The Treaty of Tlatelolco - Argentina has the most advanced nuclear capability of any Latin American state, substantial uranium reserves, and the greatest potential for an autonomous fuel cycle. American efforts to prevent proliferation in Latin America depend in large part on Argentina's acceptance of full-scope safeguards (which Argentina has shown a conditional willingness to consider) and deferral of its fuel reprocessing system program. We are considering providing heavy water technology to the Argentines if they will forego reprocessing. Argentina has signed the Treaty of Tlatelolco, but it has not ratified it. If Argentina is willing to consider safeguards, it should be willing to ratify Tlatelolco.

Anti-Semitism - Anti-Semitism has been a recurrent problem in Argentina. The government denies that anti-Semitism is an official policy. In recent months, due

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S20000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

☒ Release ☐ Excise ☐ Deny

Exemption(s):

Declassify: ☐ In Part ☒ In Full

☐ Classify as ☐ Extend as ☐ Downgrade to

Date ☐ Declassify on Reason

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to several related incidents, there has been concern that anti-Semitism may be on the rise. The Gravier financial scandal in April led to the arrest of several Jews. One of the most prominent, Jacobo Timerman, editor of La Opinion, is still being held incommunicado for vague economic charges. Two issues of Cabildo, a right-wing, anti-Semitic magazine were banned by the government, but not before it was widely distributed. The representative of the American Jewish Committee in Buenos Aires, Jacobo Kovadloff, was the target of death threats. He fled to the United States in July. The recent arrest of the Deutsch family in Cordoba has again alerted the US Jewish community to possible anti-Semitism in Argentina.

Trade - The US had a \$250 million trade surplus with Argentina in 1976. The Argentines are concerned, obviously, and have requested that we allow imports of fresh beef from Patagonia to somewhat redress the imbalance. (Argentina has foot and mouth disease, and we limit meat imports to cooked items. However, Patagonia is foot and mouth free, and the Argentines want us to allow meat imports from there. Our legislation prohibits such a geographic division.)

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